

Simsbury Public Library Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes of September 20, 2004 Meeting

PRESENT: Bert Kaplan, Gail Ryan, Charmaine Glew, Anne Erickson, Babs Gardner, and Carol Bingham. Susan Bullock, Director. Eileen Sickinger, Recording Secretary. Kathy Miller, Friends.

Carol Bingham, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:25 P.M. Bert Kaplan moved that the minutes of the August 16, 2004 meeting be approved with one change: Septemberfest theme: "Grow With Your Library". Second. C. Glew. So moved. There were no additional agenda items and no public audience.

COMMUNICATIONS: Mrs. Bullock shared a thank you note from a parent praising the staff of the Children's Room, in particular Pam Sottolano, for the successful summer programs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Kathy Miller reported for Friends that the Book Sale was very successful again this year. Over 80% of the books collected were sold. Approximately \$27,600 was raised. It seems that more book dealers are purchasing books by categories and many are selling them over the Internet.

Carol Bingham's article was in the September "Doorways". The response to the membership survey included in the September issue was overwhelmingly in favor of the expansion. The majority of those responding feel that funding should come from a variety of sources – the Town, private donations, and/or grants. The original fund drive for the current building was in the \$250,000 range and it grew, with interest over a three-year period, to approximately \$400,000. The funding for the proposed expansion is up to the Board of Finance. It is not the intention of the Library Board to raise taxes and funding will be based on the Town's bonding situation and the Finance Board's decision. The Personnel Committee was not able to meet last month and will schedule a meeting within the next few weeks.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mrs. Bullock reported on the current staffing situation and distributed a list of employees who have either resigned recently or are out for medical/family reasons. More than one quarter of the staff is out on extended leave. Fifty percent of the adult circulation staff is not available to work. She is hopeful that the vacant positions will be posted soon and that some solution can be worked out to fill in for those out temporarily. Since the programs for September and October were planned in advance, the impact of the staff shortfall will not be felt now, but programming for January through March will be greatly impacted. There will be fewer programs, less publicity, and the goals for the year will not be met. Those staff members currently on board are extremely loyal and doing their best to keep the Library on task. The Board expressed their concern over the situation and the hope that something can be done, even if only on a short-term basis, to ease things. Contractual wording makes it difficult to extend the hours for some of the staff and the current grievance by part-time employees all impact the situation.

BUILDING UPDATE: At 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, September 30th there will be a public awareness meeting in the Program Room of the Library. This will be the first in a series of meetings to bring the public up-to-date on the need for the Library expansion. Representatives from the Library Board, Board of Selectmen and Friends will make presentations. Since the Library Board unanimously supports the \$7.3 million amount for the May referendum, a task force was formed to explore avenues of making the public more aware of the need for the expansion. The entire Board will be a part of the group, and the Director, as well as

someone from Friends, and the general public, will be invited to join. The first meeting is scheduled for October 4th starting at 7:15th P.M.

The regular meetings of the Board will be restructured and a building update will always be on the Agenda. The Director's Report will be summarized at the meeting and the Director will be asked if she could e-mail the written report to members prior to the meeting.

SEPTEMBER 30TH MEETING: Four members of the Board will be in attendance: Gail Ryan, Anne Erickson, Charmaine Glew and Babs Gardner. Tom Vincent and Joel Mandell will be invited to attend. Babs Gardner is to pursue the procedure of ensuring that the library construction is on the May referendum. A letter from Carol Bingham, Chair of the Board, will be mailed to interested residents inviting them to the meeting and asking for their support.

At 9:40 P.M. Gail Ryan moved for adjournment. Second: Babs Gardner. So moved.

Anne Erickson, Secretary